

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03
SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 SS-15 STR-07 CEA-01
AGRE-00 ICAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 /082 W
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O 041455Z MAY 78 ZDK ZEL
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7936

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 2162

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIN, EINV, SHUM, ES
SUBJECT: IFI LOANS - EL SALVADOR

REF: STATE 111453

1. PURSUANT TO A TELEPHONE CALL FROM ARA/CEN, I
CONTACTED VICE PRESIDENT ASTACIO TO POINT OUT THAT
WORLD BANK AND IDB SEEMD STILL UNAWARE OF GOES INTENT --
AS COMMUNICATED TO ME BY PRESIDENT ROMERO--TO DEFER
UNTIL LATE MAY VOTE ON THE TWO LOANS WHICH USG FINDS
ITSELF UNABLE TO SUPPORT.

2. VICE PRESIDENT TOLD ME THAT NOTWITHSTANDING
PRESIDENT ROMERO'S INITIAL WILLINGNESS TO PROPOSE APPROXI-
MATELY ONE MONTH'S DEFERRAL, GOES NO LONGER FELT IT
SHOULD PURSUE THAT COURSE OF ACTION. IT WOULD, INSTEAD,
LET BOTH LOANS COME TO A VOTE ON SCHEDULE.

3. IN EXPLAINING THIS COURSE OF ACTION, VICE PRESIDENT
SAID GOES FELT IT WAS BEING BADLY TREATED BY USG.
ACCUSATIONS BY ITS ADMITTED POLITICAL ENEMIES OF HUMAN
RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WERE BEING ACCEPTED AT FACE VALUE.
GOES WAS BEING DENIED ELEMENTAL JUSTICE IN TERMS OF
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RIGHT OF RESPONSE TO ACCUSATIONS. AND ON SUMMARILY
SHORT NOTICE IT WAS BEING ASKED TO WITHDRAW OR DEFER
LOAN APPLICATIONS INTO WHICH MUCH THOUGHT AND PREPARATION
HAD GONE AND FOR WHICH AMPLE JUSTIFICATION EXISTED.

4. IN ACCORANCE WITH VICE PRESIDENT'S SUGGESTION, I
PURSUED SAME SUBJECT FURTHER LAST EVENING WITH MINISTER

OF PLANNING REYES WHO WAS A GUEST AT HOME OF USAID MISSION DIRECTOR RUIZ. HE CONFIRMED POSITION OF GOES AS STATED BY VICE PRESIDENT AND CONVEYED SENSE OF SOME PERSONAL INDIGNATION AND SADNESS AT SHORT SHRIFT WHICH WE SEEMED TO BE GIVING POSITION AND VIEWS OF FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT SUCH AS GOES.

5. MINISTER REYES SAID THAT TOP LEVELS OF GOES ARE INDEED SEEKING TO IDENTIFY SELVES WITH CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS BUT ARE FACED WITH CONTINUING INTRANSIGENCE BY POLITICAL OPPOSITION AND ACTIVIST ELEMENTS OF CATHOLIC CHURCH. STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN, HE SAID, AND FURTHER MEASURES ARE CONTEMPLATED TO ACHIEVE HUMAN-RIGHTS PROGRESS ALONG LINES STIPULATED IN PARA 4(A) OF STATE 103956. BUT, HE SAID, THESE ARE NOT EASY MATTERS WITH WHICH TO DEAL RAPIDLY UNDE THE CIRCUMSTANCES PRESENTLY PREVAILING IN EL SALVADOR. AND PROGRESS IS NOT HELPED, HE ADDED, BY DISPOSITION OF FOREIGN AUDIENCES TO ACT ONLY ON THE BASIS OF THAT VERSION OF EVENTS PROPAGATED BY ENEMIES OF THE GOVERNMENT. WHILE EXPRESSING HIS OWN AND HIS ASSOCIATES' DETERMINATION TO PRESS AHEAD FOR PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS, HE EXPRESSED--AS HAD VICE PRESIDENT--DISTASTE FOR OUR LINKAGE OF SUCH PROGRESS WITH THESE SPECIFIC LOANS.

6. IN CONCLUDING HIS REMARKS, MINISTER REYES MADE
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CLEAR HOPE OF GOES THAT USG WOULD FIND IT POSSIBLE TO SUPPORT ALL THREE IMMINENT LOANS AND CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WITH GOES IN FURTHERANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS WELL AS OTHER MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.

7. MINISTER OF INTERIOR GENERAL ROJAS WAS ALSO PRESENT AT USAID DIRECTOR RUIZ'S RECEPTION AND REITERATED HIS WILLINGNESS TO WORK WITH US FOR ADVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS. (AS WE SEE IT, HIS ROLE COULD BE CRUCIAL GIVEN HIS MEMBERSHIP IN AND HIGH-LEVEL INFLENCE WITH THE MILITARY.)

8. INTERESTED PARTICIPANTS DURING PART OF THIS DISCUSSION WERE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE STAFF MEMBER (HIRC) EUGENE FRIEDMAN AND AID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR ABELARDO VALDEZ. LATTER COMMENTED TO ME IN AN ASIDE THAT IN INTEREST OF OVER-ALL CONSISTENCY OF OUR POLICY AT LEAST THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA HE THOUGHT IT APPROPRIATE TO LOOK AT COMPARISON OF HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS IN HAITI AND EL SALVADOR AND CONTRAST BETWEEN OUR EMERGING ASSISTANCE POSTURE IN BOTH PLACES.
DEVINE

NOTE BY OC/T: MESSAGE DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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Message Attributes

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